

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 7, 2014

Mr. Gary Goecke
Chief, Environmental Assessment Section
Office of Environment (GM 623E)
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management
Gulf of Mexico OCS Region
1201 Elmwood Park Boulevard
New Orleans, LA 70123-2394

Re: Comments on Final Programmatic EIS for G&G Activities in the Mid- and South Atlantic OCS

Dear Mr. Goecke,


We are writing to commend the Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management (BOEM) for completing the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for Geological and Geophysical Activities in the Mid- and South Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Planning Areas. By choosing to allow companies to conduct seismic surveys in the Atlantic we will be able to get a much better estimate of potential Atlantic OCS oil and natural gas resources. The lack of any observed injuries or long-term impacts to marine animals during seismic testing is strong evidence that the current mitigation measures being used are protective of marine animals. Therefore, we ask that BOEM move to expeditiously issue a Record of Decision (ROD) that considers the current science and recognizes the lack of impacts observed during decades of seismic surveys so that companies can move forward with seismic testing in the Mid- and South Atlantic OCS.


This seismic testing and the potential for future offshore oil and natural gas development are important to the Atlantic states. The economic downturn negatively impacted us and we are still recovering. Diversifying our coastal economies is a priority, and we feel that offshore oil and natural gas exploration offers a potential opportunity to create jobs and revenue for our states. Studies show that development of offshore resources could create a significant number of jobs for our communities and generate revenue for critical infrastructure projects. We need to update our understanding of the potential oil and natural gas resources so that everyone involved can make sound business and policy decisions.

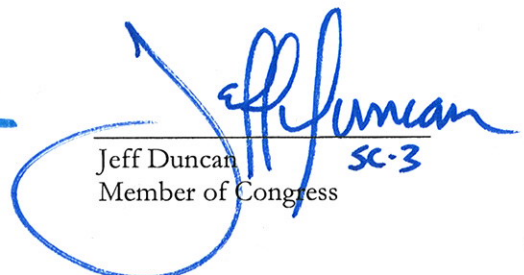
We are encouraged that BOEM's PEIS indicates that this testing can be performed in an environmentally safe manner and look to BOEM to issue a ROD that allows for seismic surveying in the Atlantic without undue operational constraints. Following this, we would ask that BOEM work quickly to approve permits for seismic surveys. With this commitment we can begin the long overdue process of improving our energy and economic security.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with you in the future as we move forward in considering future offshore oil and natural gas exploration and development opportunities.

Sincerely,


Scott Rigell
Member of Congress

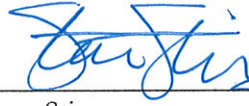

Robert Wittman
Member of Congress


Jeff Duncan SC-3
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Mark Meadows
Member of Congress



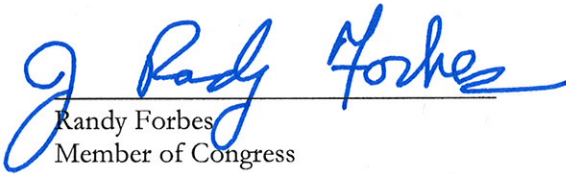
Steve Stivers
Member of Congress



Robert Pittenger
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Randy Forbes
Member of Congress